



# SOUTHEAST NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 43, Number 1

Winter (January-March) 1995

---

## **Amistad UCC Observes First Annual Church Meeting**

The new Amistad UCC became a worshipping congregation on the first Sunday in May 1993. At that time, the Pilgrimage UCC of Marietta graciously asked the Bible Study group that was to become Amistad UCC to share Pilgrimage's facility. Eighteen months later it was reported at Amistad's first annual church meeting, held on Sunday, January 15, 1995, that:

Amistad now has 121 members.

The church owns property valued over \$650,000.

The budget for 1994 was \$93,500.

The adopted budget, by consensus, for 1995 is \$218,000.

The church's gymnasium building houses Victory Christian Academy, a school for kindergarten through 12th grades, with 40 students.

The church building, 5 days a week, houses Circle of Faith Daycare, from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m., with 70 children.

Amistad's organizing minister, Flora Wilson Bridges, attributes the church's strong growth to the grace of God and the people's strong commitment to both the church and to the community. Amistad raises the church's budget solely by means of tithing. The church's theology, grounded in the minister's teachings from the Bible, does not permit any form of selling or fund raising. Secondly, Amistad's Bible Study has over 75% church membership attendance on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 and the Church School, held on Sunday mornings at 9:30, is rapidly approaching that statistic. The congregation is becoming increasingly biblically literate.

The church is also firmly committed to the Cobb County community ... all of the community. Reverend Bridges reported to the congregation:

"Although we are overwhelmingly a middle-class, educated congregation, we must make our focus the 'least and the last.'"

"The poor must be welcomed and made to feel at home in our midst. My vision is that we will never become an elitist, unfriendly, cold congregation with a 'club mentality' that excludes the poorest of the poor and those who are traditionally oppressed in church and society. The value system of our African and African-American heritage teaches us that everybody is God's child; therefore, everybody is somebody. Our church must continue to be characterized by genuine love, friendship and warmth. This is pleasing in God's sight."

Reverend Bridges states that, "God has been good to this church. These are extraordinary people full of faith and love for God in Christ Jesus. The love affair between God and Amistad is reciprocal: we love the Lord, and the Lord has shown over and over again that God truly loves us and we are so grateful for all of God's goodness. I thank God daily for this amazing journey called Amistad."

## **Board of Directors Celebrates and Gives Thanks**

At the January 20-21 meeting many reports were heard and actions taken:

*Sent \$20,000 to National OCWM (\$7,000 over goal).*

*Sent \$48,000 from special offerings (OGHS, NIN, DOV, Strengthen the Church, Hunger, Peace. etc.).*

*Celebrated \$262,665 pledges from SEC to Make A Difference – our Challenge Goal was \$250,000.*

*Thanked Anne Ariail as Flood Coordinator, and heard of over \$49,000 being received (\$22,000 from Iowa) for flood relief.*

Thanks to all in the Conference whose commitment made this possible.

Other items:

*Approved the Structures Report before it went to Cluster Meetings, and looking toward the final report for Annual Meeting in June.*

*Approved the Annual Meeting plans, June 9-11, at Simpsonwood Retreat Center.*

*Approved the Personnel Committee report to do Transitional Staffing during '95 in preparation for new Structure proposal regarding staffing.*

## ***Need Funding?***

Do you have a social justice or hunger action project that could use some additional funding? The Conference retains a portion of the Just Peace and Hunger Action offerings for use at the local level, and applications for those funds are due April 1st.

The Commission on Christian Social Justice administers this money, and application forms are available from any member of that Commission, or from the Conference office (1-800-807-1993). Projects need to be endorsed by a United Church of Christ congregation, but may be carried out by other groups. For more information, contact Commission members or Dorothy Gager, (615) 292-0934.

## CONFERENCE COMMENTS

### CONFERENCE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

#### ***"Grab Tight To Each Other's Hands!"***

The beginning of '95 is a good time to reflect on where we are. L. Robert Keck, in *Sacred Eyes*, says that humanity has come through he childhood and adolescent epochs in history, and now we are "Coming of Age into Adult Maturity: Spiritual Development." It is having eyes, viewing life spiritually, and being involved with the human community and in the world as a soul enterprise. As the currents of the flood waters rose and swirled, a mother yelled to her family, "Grab tight each other's hands! Only in holding together, will we make it and be saved!"

How better to speak of the beloved community of Christ's Church—lifting each other's hand, knowing we belong together in life's journey and celebrations, because we belong to Christ. Such an old message! But so new as I get calls every week from people wanting to know where there's a United Church of Christ near them in the Southeast, because they "heard it believes and cares to be an inclusive community of grace and mission;" and also that we resolved at the '93 General Synod to be a truly multi-racial, multi-cultural church. God is calling, awakening us to be such!

However, becoming Christ's community for these days requires more than good will and nice intentions. I remind you of three items which are indispensable, and I lay them on your hearts and on each church's agenda. First, the longing and hunger for spiritual reality by so many leads to the Gospel, with its liberating and convicting power. A whole Gospel brings us to new issues, new people, new life and new joy. We can rationalize and dress it up, but the spiritual journey and a church's life will be short-lived without the Gospel's compelling power.

Secondly, building up the body of Christ is the focus for a pastor and congregation's working in synch together, in order to be a vital congregation in mission. As someone said, "We have lots of busy and good activities, but when they're finished, the whole community of faith has not been strengthened." When a church operates as an interdependent body, the synergy can result in continuity of the church for the next generation.

Finally, the "Big C"—commitment. Being tithers and supporting mission beyond our church, through Our Church's Wider Mission, are life-giving for you and your church. Have you ever seen a church with vitality that had no mission giving? On the contrary, vital churches are committed to mission. Have you ever seen a pocketbook-protection person who had a generous spirit and joyful disposition? On the contrary, joyful purpose is exhibited by those who are committed. As the author says, 'the uncommitted life is not worth living!' I know that most of us are over-extended, but not always clear about being committed to what is life-giving.

Consider—and pray—for sacred eyes and your community—be a family of God.

Faithfully,

Roger D. Knight  
Conference Minister

## **Associate Conference Minister:** ***Meditation on Identity***

I have read with special interest the Conference Minister's message in this particular issue of our Southeast Conference News. My judgment is that he has been appropriately precise and thoughtful in lifting up the priority subject of community along with the concomitant prerequisites and exceptional benefits applicable to our highly dispersed and diverse Conference community. I urge all to read it thoughtfully and prayerfully.

What I offer here is my discovery of one other dimension and side effect of community. It is personal and its source and inspiration for me has been partially in the Gospels. Please recall Matthew 16:13ff. There you can notice Jesus testing out the disciples. Coming directly to the point he asks, "Who do you hear others say that I am?" Then come the awkward responses that very obviously do not satisfy. So he repeats the question this time pushing them a bit tighter against the forensic wall, and then comes to the answer that matches his own sense of identity. Strangely enough it comes from the most unlikely person – Peter, the awkward, blundering fisherman, ordained to be the "rock" upon which the church will stand and prevail. The point that seems abundantly clear to me is that in community we should expect times when we need to rediscover, clarify and confirm our own self-identity.

Therefore let my say ...

At the last Conference Board (January 20-21), an official announcement was made in an unintentionally curt manner that I would be going on part time in my position as Associate Conference Minister. It's true that I will, but let me clarify for everyone interested or concerned that I offered the suggestion and will participate in what is a mutual plan of productive implementation between the Conference Minister, Roger Knight, and me. The requested change in status is based mainly on my reassessment of personal as well as family priorities within the scope of my ministry. The timing is also appropriate inasmuch as on January 19, I realized I have been blessed with good health and God's favor to serve the United Church of Christ, the ecumenical community, and the proud men and women and their families of the United States military for a little more than forty-eight continuous years of ordained ministry. In my request and agreement with the Conference, I will be serving a time of transition with mutually adjusted duties and responsibilities. Details are being worked out to effect an orderly process for both me and the Conference.

Mitchell "Mitch" Johnson  
Associate Conference Minister

## OCWM GIVING DECEMBER 31, 1994

Churches by Association	Fourth Quarter	1994 To Date
<b>ALABAMA-TENNESSEE</b>		
Alpine, King's Chapel	156.00	156.00
Belvidere, First	2,550.00	6,072.75
Birmingham, First	2,300.00	4,500.00
Birmingham, Pilgrim	1,209.00	4,809.00
Chattanooga, First	.00	.00
Chattanooga, Pilgrim	3,637.67	10,984.25
Chattanooga, Sheares	.00	358.00
Crossville, UCC	750.00	3,330.00
Cullman, St. John's	2,700.00	8,600.00
Deer Lodge, Congregational	300.00	1,200.00
Fairfield Glade	925.00	3,700.00
Garden City, CC Church	115.50	462.00
Glenmary, CC Church	.00	.00
Hanceville, Mountain Grove	.00	100.00
Huntsville, United	1,500.00	6,000.00
Knoxville, Church of the Savior	640.00	2,890.00
Marion, First	.00	.00
Montgomery, First	3,800.00	3,800.00
Nashville, First	2,000.00	6,000.00
Nashville, Brookmeade	225.00	900.00
Nashville, Howard	.00	600.00
Pleasant Hill, Community Church	5,213.73	19,027.38
Robbins, Barton Chapel	.00	.00
Sweetwater, First	.00	250.00
Talladega, First	.00	200.00
Tougaloo, Union UCC	.00	.00
Waverly, United	140.00	260.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28,162.50</b>	<b>84,499.98</b>

### **EAST ALABAMA-WEST GEORGIA**

Alex City, First	.00	.00
Columbus, United	.00	.00
Dadeville, Elder	.00	.00
E. Tallassee, Congregational Church	.00	.00
Eclectic, Watson's Chapel	.00	.00
Five Points, State Line	.00	.00
LaFayette, Pleasant Grove	.00	848.00
LaGrange, Hillside	.00	.00
LaGrange, United	56.00	224.00

Lanett	986.00	3,000.00
Langdale	380.00	570.00
Phenix City, Russell Woods	380.00	1,140.00
Pine Forest	.00	.00
Pine Mountain, Oak Grove	.00	.00
Roanoke, Antioch	.00	570.00
Roanoke, Bethany	142.00	142.00
Roanoke, Forest Home	.00	.00
Roanoke, New Hope	.00	570.00
Roanoke, North Main	190.00	570.00
Roanoke, Rock Stand	.00	.00
Valley, Todd	.00	.00
Wadley, Corinth	237.00	475.00
Wedowee, Noon Day	.00	.00
Woodbury, Jones Chapel	912.00	2,736.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,283.00</b>	<b>10,845.00</b>

#### **GEORGIA-SOUTH CAROLINA**

Atlanta, Central	6,694.35	26,776.20
Atlanta, First	2,750.00	11,000.00
Atlanta, Rush	.00	500.00
Atlanta, Southwest	.00	.00
Atlanta, UCC	.00	.00
Beachton, Evergreen	495.00	990.00
Buford, Duncan's Creek	.00	.00
Center Congregational Church	.00	210.00
Central Congregational Women	.00	200.00
Charleston, Circular	666.66	3,333.30
Charleston, Plymouth	.00	1,350.00
Columbia, Fellowship	.00	.00
Demorest, Federated	120.36	238.42
Dewy Rose, Liberty	.00	.00
GA-SC Association	.00	2,200.00
Jonesboro, Trinity	1,800.00	7,200.00
Marietta, Pilgrimage	1,668.00	5,753.00
Midway, Congregational Church	.00	600.00
Savannah, First	400.00	1,000.00
Thomasville, Bethany	.00	300.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,594.37</b>	<b>61,650.92</b>

#### **SOUTH ALABAMA-N.W. FLORIDA**

Andalusia, Antioch	.00	1,400.00
Andalusia, First	220.00	550.00
Baker, Good Hope	.00	.00

Baker, Pyron	.00	.00
Bonifay, New Effort	.00	.00
Brantley, Indian Creek	.00	.00
Brantley, Liberty	100.00	400.00
Clio, New Hope	.00	50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>320.00</b>	<b>2,400.00</b>

## ***VICTORY!!!!***

### ***Hallelujah! Surely a miracle!***

*FOR WE HAVE NOW SURPASSED OUR SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE CHALLENGE GOAL OF \$250,000. We now stand at \$262,165.00! Surely God has been at work among us!*

Our thanks to those Southeast Conference churches which have held campaigns. According to the list in the Cleveland office, those churches are as follows:

- Cullman
- LaFayette
- Midway
- Huntsville
- Atlanta, Central

In addition, a number of individuals have given from congregations that have not campaigned. Some of these are quite large gifts.

Throughout the United Church of Christ, over 850 congregations are committed to campaigning between now and June ... which is expected to produce \$26,000,000 by General Synod. Among these are the following Southeast Conference congregations (according to Covenant forms mailed to the Cleveland office):

- Marietta, Amistad
- Alexander City
- Birmingham, First
- Birmingham, Pilgrim
- Brantley
- Clio
- East Tallassee
- Lanett
- Montgomery
- Roanoke, Bethany
- Roanoke, North Main
- Roanoke, New Hope
- Talladega
- Langdale
- Atlanta, First
- Atlanta, Rush

Columbus  
Jonesboro  
Marietta, Pilgrimage  
Savannah  
Woodbury  
Charleston, Circular  
Charleston, Plymouth  
Belvidere  
Chattanooga, Pilgrim  
Crossville  
Knoxville  
Nashville, Brookmeade  
Nashville, First  
Nashville, Howard

If there are other churches which should be included in the above two lists, please let me know.

As we approach the soon-to-dawn new century, increasing numbers of seminarians will need help with rising costs of education. New church starts will need more help in purchasing land. Many older churches, such as those Native American congregations, need help in refurbishing facilities. Endowments are needed to continue ministries for generations to come. Surely all Southeast Conference congregations want to get on board this once in a lifetime campaign before it ends this June.

If your church missed the training sessions and you need some help in doing a campaign, please let me know.

John R. Lackey  
Conference Campaign Director  
(615) 690-3127

## **1995 Annual Meeting**

The 1995 SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING will be held June 9, 10, & 11 at beautiful Simpsonwood Conference and Retreat Center in Norcross, Georgia (just north of Atlanta). The meeting's theme, "The Voice of One ..." will be expressed in various creative ways by all those present along with keynote presenter the Rev. Mr. Daniel Romero, General Secretary, Mission Program Unit, United Church Board for World Ministries and the Rev. Ms. Mary Sue Gast, Executive Director, Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society.

It is the goal of this Annual Meeting to create an atmosphere of family and community. Simpsonwood provides a "self-contained" setting in which this might be accomplished. Therefore, you are encouraged NOT to commute, or to come just for Saturday, but rather "Come for the entire experience as we seek the voice of God, Ourselves, and the Church, together." Some might argue, "that the cost is too



high.” The conference fees are totally inclusive (meals, snacks, lodging, etc.) and represent a savings over procuring lodging, meals, etc. “on your own” in the Atlanta area. Possibly your congregation could hold a soup supper, or some other fund raiser to assure that your pastor (and spouse?) and your delegates are able to attend this time of rejuvenation, fellowships, education, and personal growth. Plan now to send your pastor and delegates for the entire conference. And remember, EARLY REGISTRATION WILL SAVE YOU BIG MONEY!

Sunday, June 11th has been declared UCC SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE LAITY SUNDAY so that your pastor and delegates do not have to hurry home from the Annual Meeting and miss important sessions. Laity Sunday materials are being prepared (liturgy, sermon, prayers, etc.) and will be sent to each congregation in early May for use on June 11th. Last year at least 17 congregations used all or part of the furnished materials. Plan now to participate and allow your pastor and delegates to attend the entire conference!

This year’s Annual Meeting should be more like a family reunion than a meeting, and isn’t that what it should be? MARK YOUR CALENDAR, June 9-11, 1995 and get your registration in early for the 1995 SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING! Come and visit with your family!

## ***Guidelines for Presentation and Consideration of Resolutions/Statements of Concern***

I. Delegates, local congregations and committees, individuals with endorsement of a local church council, and Conference program units, may submit resolutions or statements of concern for the Annual Meeting no later than March 23, 1995. They should be mailed to the attention to Resolutions/Concerns Chairperson, 756 West Peachtree Street N.W., Atlanta, GA 30308.

II. Two vehicles for presentation of issues or concerns are provided for at the 1995 Annual Meeting.

A. Resolution: This is the way that concerns or issues may be brought to a decision at the Annual Meeting. A resolution must have implications affecting the program and/or the budget of the Conference. Resolutions may be acted upon under *Robert’s Rules of Order* or may be considered by consensus, with the options of stating consensus, stating areas of consensus and areas of difference or waiting for future enlightenment and discernment. The Resolutions/Concerns Moderator and Minister will determine how a resolution will be acted upon after hearing discussion. To overrule this decision, a motion for a two-thirds majority vote must be made, seconded and passed by the Conference voting members.

B. Statement of Concern: This is the way that concerns or issues are brought to the attention of the Conference for consciousness raising, research and reflection, educational purposes and mobilization of individual or local church consideration. Statements of concern will be presenting to the Annual Meeting in the following ways: for limited discussion on the floor without a vote; for a forum or panel presentation; as a position paper presented for distribution and/or

presentation only. How a statement of concern will be presented will be determined by the Business or Resolutions/Concerns Committee. A statement's contact person will be notified as to how his/her issue will be presented. The voting members of the Conference may request with a simple majority vote to have any particular statement of concern referred to the appropriate committee of the Conference for further research and reflection or by request of the Resolutions/Concerns Committee Chair, delegates may be polled informally to determine current views of the issues involved in any particular statement of concern.

III. In order to insure thoughtful consideration by the Annual Meeting, the following components should be included in a resolution or statement of concern (limit of two pages):

- title/subject of the resolution or statement of concern
- name, address and phone number of contact person and presenter, if these are different
- concise background leading to the submission
- theological and Biblical perspective
- clear wording of the actual resolution or statement and in the case of a resolution, the action being requested of the Annual Meeting should be highlighted in a summary statement beginning with "Be it resolved ..."
- also in the case of a resolution, itemized budget implications for the Conference and a time frame for achieving the requested action
- program implication for the Conference, associations and/or local implications
- relationship to present Conference directions, if possible

IV. The Resolutions/Concerns Committee will review all resolutions and statements of concern and/or:

- A. If warranted, correlate and establish communication between or among proponents of similar resolutions or statements;
- B. If necessary, negotiate with proponents any resolutions or statements deemed inappropriate for consideration in their present form;
- C. If appropriate, refer to the proper Conference committee for their review and preparation of comment and clarification;
- D. If necessary, reject for inclusion on the Annual Meeting agenda, any resolution or statement of concern inconsistent with the mission and ministries of the Southeast Conference.

V. The Resolutions/Concerns Committee may at its discretion add items to the agenda upon request and adequate explanation as to why the resolution or statement of concern could not have been submitted by the specified date. If a late submission is accepted, it shall be the responsibility of the presenter to provide adequate copies for all delegates.

If there are any questions regarding these procedures, please contact Reverend Karl Whiteman, 4071 Owl Hollow Road, Belvidere, TN 37306. Phone: (615) 967-0380 or (615) 967-0180.

## ***How Do We Weave a Faithful Cloth? One Great Hour of Sharing***

The 1995 ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING materials ask, "How do we weave a faithful cloth when 45% of the world's children go to bed hungry in three countries on India, Pakistan and Bangladesh? The apostle Paul asks us how are we knit together in love in a world where eighty million Chinese have to walk more than one mile for a glass of water that is drinkable?"

Since 1949, the ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING offering has provided vital testimony that what we do together is more powerful than what we can achieve as single individuals. Now is the time to start planning for yours and your church's participation in OGHS. Each church should have received the informational and publicity material packet by now. Please use it, it does make a difference! This year's materials are extremely creative for use with all ages. The material in the packet has been produced on quality paper to improve reproduction. Please share and use these important concepts with children and adults in your congregation, as you prepare for the March 25, 1995 OGHS collection.

Current events have bombarded us with images of people in distress ... in Rwanda, the Middle East, California, the Caribbean, Japan, and Eastern Europe. "The Fabric of Faith," a new 8-minute (VHS) video, shows how our OGHS offering weaves us together with people who are affected by the stark realities of hunger, poverty and violence. This video resource presents a vivid picture that can help your congregation see how their gifts to OGHS can make a real difference in this country and around the world. To obtain a copy for loan/use at no cost (except postage), call the Southeast Conference Office at (404) 607-1993. Or, to obtain a copy for your church library at no cost (except postage), call United Church Resources at 1-800-325-7061. Please make use of these resources. If you have questions, or would like suggestions on how to better utilize the OGHS materials, feel free to contact United Church Board for World Ministries, Southeast Conference Convener, Rev. Karl K. Whiteman at (615) 967-0180 or 0380. He will be happy to assist your church in achieving a successful OGHS offering.

How do we weave a faithful cloth? We weave, we build, we work, we share. Patterns in a tapestry. The fabric of our faith is revealed in a love that sets us free. When local churches participate in the 1995 One Great Hour of Sharing offering, gifts of money are transformed into a cup of clean water, a vocational skill which leads to self-sufficiency, a village plan for development that counters hunger, a warm blanket, a meal, a hand that reaches out to offer hope.

Working together, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!! *SUPPORT OGHS!*

## ***Brookmeade UCC Declares Itself***

## ***“Open and Affirming”***

The Brookmeade Congregational Church, UCC in Nashville, TN, in a congregational meeting on October 30, 1994, vote overwhelmingly to declare itself “Open & Affirming.” The Covenant and Declaration passed by the congregation reads in part ...

“The UCC has historically affirmed a rich diversity in its theological and Biblical perspectives, and has committed itself to an inclusive social ministry. We welcome people of all sexual orientations to join our congregation in the same spirit and manner used in the acceptance of any new members.

“Therefore, we declare ourselves as an Open and Affirming Church with an inclusive non-discrimination covenant. Because of our calling we do not discriminate against any person, group, or organization in membership, appointment, use of facility, provision of services, hiring, promotion or funding on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, faith, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, or physical disability.

“We further commit ourselves to work to overcome, in ourselves and others, attitudes and acts of injustice, discrimination, wholeness.”

The vote followed by a year-long planning and study/discussion process coordinated by the church’s Board of Deacons which involved the entire congregation in a series of presentations, discussions and times of sharing together. “Actually, we had in fact, become an open and affirming congregation over a ten-year period,” said the Brookmeade pastor, Dan Rosemergy, “but we reached the point of feeling that it was time to formally declare that we were ‘Open and Affirming,’ both to stand in solidarity with the many gays and lesbians around the country who are discriminated against and excluded from the full life of the community, and to let them hear us say, ‘You are welcome and affirmed, and we want/need one another in the building up of this church.’”

The congregation members had many opportunities to learn, to look within themselves at their own feelings, and to come to this common commitment. The study sessions included the following:

“Being an Open and Affirming Church: Theological and Ethical Issues for Our Faith” – Rev. Joseph Hough, Dean of the Vanderbilt Divinity School, an ordained UCC minister and member of Brookmeade.

“Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality: What the Bible Does and Doesn’t Say” – Rev. David Buttrick, Professor of Homiletics & Liturgies at Vanderbilt, an ordained UCC minister and member of Brookmeade.

Other UCCers who came to share with Brookmeade included Rev. Ben Guess from Henderson, KY; Ted and Donna Braun of Pleasant Hill, TN (UCC Parents of Lesbians and Gays); and Rev. Ann Day, the UCC Open and Affirming (ONA) Program Coordinator and former Brookmeader.

“The process itself ... of openly and honestly sharing with one another was deeply moving and important for us,” said Rev. Rosemergy. “We came out of it a closer, more loving community.”

For further information about the process at Brookmeade, or for copies of some of the material used, please call or write:

Rev. Dan Rosemergy, D.M.

Brookmeade Congregational Church, UCC, 700 Bresslyn Road  
Nashville, TN 37205; (615) 352-4702

## ***Pleasant Hill Community Church Celebrates 110th Anniversary***

The Pleasant Hill Community Church (Pleasant Hill, TN) will celebrate its 110th anniversary with special services and a new addition on March 19th, 1995. The Rev. Robert Peeples, Pastor Emeritus, will preach on the theme of the church moving from its history into the future. The Rev. Roger Knight, Southeast Conference Minister, will preach on April 23rd on the church's roots in the tradition of the Southeast Conference and its growing into the future.

To climax the series, on May 13th and 14th, Rev. Dr. Thomas Dipko, Executive Vice President of the UCBHM will be the featured speaker at ceremonies to dedicate the new wing to the church. He will discuss the church's origin in the American Missionary Association and the founding of Pleasant Hill Academy and its future mission. The day will also feature special music and a church picnic.

The new church wing will provide the congregation with expanded facilities for classrooms, offices, choir room and new toilets. A major feature will be a large welcoming area to accommodate fellowship times and other occasions. There will also be a covered driveway to protect people from the weather when discharging from autos.

The project began in early 1991 and total cost is approximately \$240,000, of which \$196,000 was raised in gifts, pledges and bequests.

## **Christian Education Commission: A *REPORT***

This commission will retain their theme from last year: "Becoming Biblical People."

To achieve its main goal of enhancing the spiritual growth of all members of the churches in the Southeast Conference, the Commission will be meeting via teleconference meeting in early February. We plan to engage in the following activities this year:

1. To sponsor a men's retreat in late September or early October. Reverend Bob Kurtz will coordinate this retreat.

2. To present a training event to be held August 12, 1995 at Pilgrim Congregational UCC in Chattanooga, TN. This event will feature a session for church school teachers, acolytes, and confirmation. Another session will feature activities for children's ministries with adult leaders for story telling, puppetry, singing, crafts, drama and other art forms. The afternoon session will be devoted to a training event for youth leaders.

3. Activities for singles and single parents will be planned at a later date.

The Youth Council and the Youth Coordinator, Tim Klein, are alive and well. They had a very successful Youth Retreat at Pilgrim Church in Birmingham, AL in January. There were 43 youth and 12 adults in attendance. The retreat was spearheaded by Rev. Renae Koehler, associate pastor of Pilgrim Church.

Yubenia Prigmore, Chair

## ***General Synod to Consider Major Future Issues***

The General Synod will consider issues for long-term church future. Amongst many items, most of which are not yet published, are two major ones:

1. National structure of the United Church of Christ; considerable down-sizing of agencies for more effective mission; will have three program bodies (Local Church and Its Ministries, Wider Church & Its Mission, and Justice & Witness), an administrative and support body and the Pension Boards.

2. Mutual recognition of ministries between the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ, in which clergy of each denomination will be able to be called to churches in either denomination. Watch for further news. Southeast Conference delegates are Wayde Washburn, Rebecca Paschal, Andrew Frierson and Debbie Douglas; with associate delegates Richard Sales, Moderator, and Roger Knight, Conference Minister. General Synod will be in Oakland, California, June 29-July 4.

## ***CHOIR ROBES AVAILABLE***

*The Pleasant Hill Community Church has choir robes available at no cost except delivery charges by UPS, or the robes could be collected in Pleasant Hill. There are 30 maroon gowns, most of them in reasonably good shape. They come with reversible white and gold stoles. Any or all are available. Call the church office at (615) 277-3193.*

## ***FAITH'S JOURNEY***

### ***For Youth***

There is a special sense of fulfillment that comes when you are able to assist a young person clarifying his or her vocational goals. Many youth today are asking serious questions about the future, the purpose of life, how to discern individual gifts and how all this will influence their life's work. Perhaps you are in a position to provide counsel for them.

If so, then the health and human service ministries of the United Church of Christ in greater St. Louis are available to assist you in this special ministry with youth. Now in its fifth program year, Faith's Journey provides:

a unique two-week vocational-oriented encounter,

a rich resource of caring professionals, sharing their faith stories,

four two-day overnight experiences selected by the youth, Christian community, faith exploration, worship & recreation, all designed to engage high school youth in Christian service and community, and the options available to them in making vocational choices.

To receive a brochure describing the program to be held July 23-August 4, 1995, write to Rev. Cynthia S. Bumb, Chairperson, Faith's Journey, 35 West Jackson Road, St. Louis, MO 63119. Or call (314) 968-8703.

### ***Exciting Vacation Opportunity***

The Iowa-Southeast Conference Partnership Committee is sponsoring a work camp for adults and youth at the Morgan-Scott Project near Deer Lodge, TN, June 11-17, 1995. Campers will be improving houses for needy families, mostly elderly, by repairing steps, porches, roofs, floors and by painting. You can learn of the heritage of Appalachia, enjoy the beauty of the area, share in worship experiences and make new friends.

There is no fee, but you need to bring money for food and a donation to help buy the materials needed. Also bring a Bible, work clothes, hammer, sleeping bag and a foam pad or air mattress, as we will sleep on the office floor.

This is a great chance to live an adventurous week in completely different surroundings, and engage in physical exercise and friendly banter away from the "rat race." You can share God's love with a distant neighbor and feel the warm satisfaction of having made someone else's life a little bit safer and more comfortable.

Flyers with registration forms and more details are being sent to the churches.

Charlie Lord  
Iowa-Southeast Partnership Committee

### **UCC to Sponsor Weekend Marriage Encounter**

The United Church of Christ will sponsor a Marriage Encounter weekend for a second year on April 28-30 in Huntsville, Alabama.

The weekend, designed to revitalize and brighten the light of a couple's intimacy that may have dimmed over the years, is to improve already strong marriages, not those in trouble. This encounter should improve relationships with children, parents, friends, as well.

There are groups meeting regularly in Huntsville and Atlanta as a result of UCC's 1994 first Marriage Encounter Weekend that was attended by seventeen couples in 1994.

### ***Christmas Made Merrier by Southeast Conference Churches***

In late 1993, Lynn and Bill Tweed, members of United Congregational Christian Church, LaGrange, GA, drove to Elon College, NC to drop off Christmas gifts for the boys and girls at Snyder Campus of Elon Homes for Children. The Tweeds, long-time friends of the Home, decided that the following year they'd do the same for the youth at Elon Homes' Kennedy Campus.

When the East Alabama-West Georgia Association met in October 1994, Bill described the pleasure and reward Lynn and he received from the project and invited others to participate. He was prepared with a list of students and their ages and sex. The Tweeds were delighted when numerous Association members "adopted" a child or children and promised to have gifts wrapped in time for the Tweed visit to Kennedy Campus.

A wonderful variety of gifts were contributed by the following Southeast Conference churches: Elder UCC; East Tallassee Congregational UCC; LaGrange Hillside Christian; Lanett Congregational Christian; Langdale Congregational Christian; United Congregational Christian UCC, LaGrange; Oak Grove Congregational UCC; Russell Woods Congregational UCC; Antioch Congregational Christian; New Hope. Several women's fellowships made cash contributions toward the project.

Lynn and Bill were warmly welcomed to Kennedy Campus, Charlotte, NC, when they arrived in mid-December with gifts for every youth in care. The following Sunday, Lynn Tweed told her congregation that sharing Christmas with the youth of Elon Homes was the highlight of their holiday celebration. In assuming leadership for tangible expressions of love and concern from friends in the Southeast Conference to the children of Elon Homes, the Tweeds experienced anew the Christmas message of faith, hope and charity.

Sharon Landis

## ***Music in May***

***Friday, May 12, 8:00 p.m., Central Congregational Church***

***\$5***

***Charlie King with Ellise Witt and Joyce Brookshire***

***Global, Local & Homemade Music***

***A benefit for Southern Ministry Network***

***Rev. Houston Wheeler***

***(404) 624-9079***

## **CHURCH & PEOPLE NOTES**

Weddings Bells ... December 18th, 1994 for Bill Lloyd (pastor of Jones Chapel, Woodbury) and Betty Burroughs.

Mini-Camp ... April 28-30, 1995 at Christian Retreat Center, Laguna Beach, FL. Sponsored by East Alabama-West Georgia Association, Bill Lloyd, Director. For



information, write or phone Box 266, Woodland, GA 31836. Phone (706) 674-2610.

The Reverend Larry Crook, pastor of Pleasant Grove UCC, LaFayette, Ala. died Feb. 5. Memorial services on May 7 were led by Conference Minister Roger Knight and Roy Bain.

## ***Reminder ...***

### ***PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS FOR ALL CLERGY***

#### ***IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR FUTURE***

#### ***LOCATIONS ...***

***March 1 – Central Congregational, Atlanta, Georgia***

***March 2 – Pilgrim Congregational, Birmingham, Alabama***

***March 3 – Pleasant Hill Community, Pleasant Hill, Tennessee***

***10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.***

***All clergy should plan to attend!***

## ***Called to Care: Responding to Hate Groups***

The second in a series of workshops for UCC congregations was held at Pilgrimage Church in Marietta to inform and support church responses to hate group activities. Participants included members from six UCC congregations in the Atlanta area. The four-hour program was led by Loretta Ross (national coordinator with religious organizations) of the Center for Democratic Renewal (CDR). An additional resource organization included was Neighbors Network.

The workshop, using UCC tradition and beliefs, focused on how to identify today's hate groups and how local churches can effectively respond. Participants gave over twenty examples of local groups whose aims are to create divisions, hatred, and anger toward persons in other racial, ethnic, religious and economic categories.

Each church was provided with a CDR manual, *When Hate Groups Come to Town*. One of the more interesting parts of the manual is the one-page list of "Ten Points to Remember When Responding to Hate Groups." In addition, the Rev. Joe Hoffman of Central Congregational developed a curriculum bibliography for churches. These books and videos can be used with children, youth, and adults for church school curriculum.

Copies of the one-page list of "Ten Points" and the curriculum bibliography are available for the asking. Please contact Rev. Houston Wheeler at (404) 624-9079, or Jerry Plante at (404) 279-6377.

Look for Association announcements of future "Called to Care" events.

## ***Structure Committee Report***

### ***Stresses Personal Connections ...***

The cluster meetings in the Conference heard the report of the Structure Committee, with great application and adding many suggestions and questions. The proposal emphasizes our developing *personal connections* with churches in our area primarily, and connections with the wider church; "personal connections make all the difference," said chair Truman Moore. A Conference Council with elected representatives from all area groupings received unanimous approval. And a "Faith Works"-style Conference meeting (every other year) to emphasize "The Gathering of All Our Diverse Family" receives very positive response also. Any feedback is welcomed by Truman Moore, 2424 King Arthur Circle, Atlanta, GA 30345; 404/934-2881.

## **CONFERENCE CALENDAR, 1995**

Feb. 20	Structure Committee at Conference Office
Mar. 1, 2, 3	Pre-Retirement Seminars for all clergy with Carl Beyer of the Pension Board, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. each day Mar. 1 – Atlanta Central; (404) 633-4505 Mar. 2 – Birmingham Pilgrim; (205) 879-1624 Mar. 3 – Pleasant Hill Community; (615) 277-3193 Please pre-register with the appropriate host church. Contact the Conference Office two weeks in advance if you desire a "read out" of your Pension Funds which will be brought for you to the particular meeting you attend. Donation requested to cover lunch.
Mar. 4	General Synod Delegates
Mar. 24-25	Board of Directors' meeting at Villa International, Atlanta
Mar. 24	All news items to <i>Southeast News</i> for Annual Meeting edition in April
Mar. 24	Resolutions for Annual Meeting due in Conference Office
Apr. 28-30	Mini-Camp – Laguna Beach, FL
May ?	Clergy Retreat
May 21	Installation of Rodney Franklin at Birmingham First, 5:00
Jun. 9-11	Annual Meeting
Jun. 11-17	Appalachian Work Camp
Jun. 29-July 4	General Synod – Oakland, CA
Sep. 29-Oct. 1	Southeast Region Women's Retreat – Blowing Rock, NC
Sep. 29-30	Men's Retreat

**THE SOUTHEAST NEWS**

Published by the Southeast Conference  
United Church of Christ  
Conference Minister, Roger D. Knight  
Associate Conference Minister, Mitchell C. Johnson  
Office Administrator, Nan Wright  
Moderator, Richard Sales  
Vice Moderator, Annie Neal  
Secretary, Jan Whiteman  
Treasurer, Lester Ariail  
Alabama-Tennessee Association Moderator, William (Bill) Chew  
East Alabama-West Georgia Association Moderator, Jimmy Pilkington  
Georgia-South Carolina Association Moderator, Larry Calbert  
South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association Moderator, Jim Courtney  
Publication schedule: February, May, August, October, December  
Editor, Shirley W. Bowen  
(404) 607-1993 (phone)  
(404) 607-7939 (FAX)  
Mail news and other material to:  
Shirley W. Bowen  
P.O. Box 340  
Franklin, GA 30217

**The preceding was a transcription from the original publication, except for photographs and associated captions, a registration form for the 1995 Annual Meeting on page 4, and an advertisement for Church World Service on page 5. Neither the original nor the transcription are copyrighted or have rights reserved; they are in the public domain for free use. Copies of the original may be obtained from the Congregational Library, Boston, Massachusetts.**

**This transcription was recorded on September 21 and 23, 2013 by Mike Stroud, director of Project 66-16, an initiative to record, compile and write the history of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.**

PROJECT

